



# ANGEL'S WINGS



Volume 4, No. 5

920th Rescue Wing, Patrick AFB, Fla.

May 2006

**ORE**  
**hits the**  
**mark**



**Man**  
**on a**  
**mission**

## Angel's Wings

Volume 4, No. 5

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### On the Cover:

**Senior Master Sgt. Donald Rouse participates in the 920th Rescue Wing Operational Readiness Exercise in April.**

**The exercise allowed wing members to engage in scenarios that challenged their wartime readiness.**

**The next exercise will be held in September 2006.**

# New commander, renewed commitment

**By Col. Steven Kirkpatrick**  
**920th Rescue Wing**  
**Commander**

I am very proud to be your new Wing Commander. This is a great wing with outstanding people. You have accomplished many great things in the past few years.

From your combat rescue missions after 9/11 to the 1,043 saves from Hurricane Katrina, you have served this nation well.

I'd like to share my vision for the wing so we can continue to excel in all facets of rescue operations.

First, we must focus on the mission and ensure that we are always ready for any contingency world-wide.

We do this by completing all training requirements and completing all personal tasks on-time (like physicals, updating legal documents, immunizations, etc.).

We will occasionally be tasked for real-world rescue missions on a moment's notice and we must always be ready to go. We must also be ready for all inspections, including the upcoming Health Services Inspection and Operational Readiness Inspection.

We are measured by certain standards or metrics from 10 AF, AFRC, ACC and HQ AF that indicate our level of readiness.

Our SORTS status, mission capable rates and flying all of our allocated hours are very important. I will emphasize each of these items.

Second, we must take care of you. I strongly believe that your leadership must actively know how you are doing by being "in the trenches" with you.

They must complete your Officer Performance Report or



Enlisted Performance Report on time, actively reward good works through the awards and decorations program, attend or ensure someone else attends your graduations at Air Force schools and train and mentor you continuously so that you are ready to take their job when it's your turn to lead.

Our staff will also work very hard to help improve the facilities you work in. We must also ensure that your family is involved in your Reserve career and they are well informed of the demands of your work here.

If you are a traditional reservist, we must also reach out to your employers and ensure they feel a part of this wing and they are properly recognized for allowing you to serve this nation.

You are ultimately responsible for your own careers, but good leadership can truly make a difference.

Third, I want you to see your time here as rewarding and enjoyable. By working well together as

*(Cont. on Page 11)*

# *943rd Rescue Group throttles forward with new commander*

**By 1st Lt. Cathleen Snow  
920th Rescue Wing Public  
Affairs**

Col. Robert L. Dunn took command of the 943rd Rescue Group April 9 at 9 a.m. during a change-of-command ceremony at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz.

The 943rd is a geographically separated unit of the 920th Rescue Wing, based at Patrick AFB, Fla.

Colonel Dunn replaced Col. Michael G. Shook who retires after 31 years of service. He retires as a command pilot with 3,600 flight hours.

In addition to the HH-60G PaveHawk, he has flown a variety of helicopters throughout his military career.

Colonel Dunn stepped up from the deputy commander of operations position. In his new position of leadership, Colonel Dunn will direct the activities of the group's subordinate organizations, which include a flying squadron; two Guardian Angel "Pararescue" squadrons, one of which is geographically separated and assigned to Portland Air National Guard Base, Ore.; a maintenance squadron; a mission support flight; an operations support flight; and a medical flight.

Colonel Dunn was born at Keesler AFB, Miss. He is the son of retired Senior Master Sgt. Alkus L. Dunn and was raised in Fort Pierce, Fla.

He earned his Associate of Arts degree from Indian River Community College in Fort Pierce in 1975, and his commission through ROTC and a Bachelor of Science in Aerospace Engineering Technology from Kent State University, Ohio, in 1978.



Courtesy photo

**Col. Robert Dunn (right) accepts a unit guide-on from 920th Rescue Wing commander Col. Steven Kirkpatrick (left). The exchange symbolizes Colonel Dunn's assumption of command of the 943rd Rescue Group at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz. Colonel Dunn previously served as the deputy commander of operations with the group.**

After his initial assignment as an air-to-air missile engineer at Eglin AFB, Fla., Colonel Dunn attended Unit Pilot Training at Laughlin AFB, Texas, and served on active duty for 10 years before joining the Air Force Reserve unit program in 1990.

He has seen worldwide duty in Air Force Systems Command, Pacific Air Forces, Tactical Air Command, Air Combat Command, Air Force Special Operations Command and Headquarters Tenth Air Force as a unit training officer, instructor pilot, flight examiner, flight commander, operations officer and director of safety. He is a command pilot with more than 5,500 hours in the T-37, T-38A/B, A-10A, UH-1H, HH-

3E and HH-60G.

The 943rd RQG trains personnel, with equipment, to achieve and maintain the capability to perform day and night combat rescue missions; search for, locate and recover United States Air Force and other Department of Defense personnel involved with United States defense activities; provide search and rescue support of civilians as directed by the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center; and provide humanitarian and disaster relief operations at the request of the United States government through the Federal Emergency Management Agency, foreign governments and the International Civil Aviation Organization.

# 920th Rescue Wing trailers spearhead pararescumen recruitment effort

*By 2nd Lt. Jamie Pinto  
920th Rescue Wing  
Public Affairs*

**E**ver thought about jumping out of a plane head first over enemy territory?

To the Air Force Reserve pararescuemen, or PJs, of the 308th Rescue Squadron, this is just part of the job.

The adventurous duties of a pararescuman don't always appeal to everyone, which is why the 308th Rescue Squadron has gone to mobile advertisement with two newly painted trailers.

The pararescue squadron uses trailers to transport their equipment for training and exercises, but when Senior Master Sgt. Hiram Ortiz, Senior Recruiter for the 920th Rescue Wing, saw the wide open space of the barren trailers, he had a different mission in mind.

Now, the newly painted trailers serve as a recruitment tool by elaborately depicting the mission of a PJ.

"The trailers are a great way to get rolling advertisement; in addition, the trailers are used at air shows and other events with high visibility," said Sergeant Ortiz.

The PJ position is the most difficult Air Force specialty to fill due to its stringent requirements,



U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Master Sgt. Hiram Ortiz

**New trailers depicting the mission of the 308th Rescue Squadron pararescuemen are part of a revamped recruiting effort by 920th Rescue Wing recruiters.**

including more than two years of training and a 90 percent washout rate.

"The biggest manning need within the wing is pararescuemen and that is why we have such a focus on their recruitment," said Sergeant Ortiz.

The pararescue squadron currently needs to fill 35 PJ positions.

The new recruitment push focuses on the effective manning of the PJ position.

Currently, the 308th is 66 percent effectively manned. That number is

expected to drop by nearly half within the next few years if recruitment does not increase, said Sergeant Ortiz, who has implemented several new ideas to help increase PJ recruitment, including the trailers.

Another initiative is a new PJ recruitment specialist, Master Sgt. Kristi Galvin.

Sergeant Galvin's new role provides a fully equipped point of contact for recruiters nationwide to get instant information on the requirements to become a PJ.

With an average place-

ment of five PJs per year nationwide, Sergeant Ortiz is hopeful Sergeant Galvin's new role will help increase those numbers by educating recruiters nationwide.

In addition to the trailers and new recruitment specialist, SMSgt. Ortiz is also putting the word out with recruiters nationwide through a Reserve recruiter's magazine.

"You don't have to live in Florida to become a PJ and that is why we're trying to get the word out to other recruiters," said Sergeant Ortiz.

# 308th Rescue Squadron pararescue reservists enhance skills in joint training

By Ruby Zarzyczny  
939th Air Refueling Wing  
Public Affairs

Air Force reservists from the 304th Rescue Squadron at Portland International Airport partnered with five civilian rescue organizations April 22 on Mount Hood for a day-long search and rescue mock exercise.

About 50 search and rescue professionals from the Clackamas County Sheriff's department, Portland Mountain Rescue, American Medical Response's Reach and Treat team, U.S. Forestry Service, and the Mountain Wave Communication participated together in this exercise at the Timberline Lodge.

"Rescue organizations in Oregon train together several times a year," said Capt. Chris Bernard, 304th RQS combat rescue officer. "We are always interested in joint training with our civilian counterparts because it helps make all the moving parts of the [rescue] machine work."

In the exercise scenario, two people had been climbing Mount Hood when they were reported missing to the Clackamas County Sheriff's department on the night of April 21.

Mount Hood is the second most climbed mountain in the world with a snow and ice covered summit reaching more than 11,000 feet elevation.

During the exercise, Captain Bernard took care of the command and control for the 304th team at the base camp.

Capt. Quintin Nelson, 304th combat rescue officer, and squadron pararescuemen Master Sgts. Eric Giacchino and Scott Light along with Tech. Sgt. John Davis used snow axes and crampons to climb the snow cov-



U. S. Air Force Photo/Ruby Zarzyczny

**Master Sgts. Scott Light (left) and Eric Giacchino, Tech. Sgt. John Davis, 304th Rescue Squadron pararescuemen and Capt. Quintin Nelson, 304th RQS combat rescue officer use ice axes and ski [walking] poles to climb the icy mountain while searching for two lost climbers during a search and rescue scenario on Mount Hood, Ore., April 22, 2006.**

ered mountain with their medical and rescue equipment on their backs.

Once they reached the 9,500-foot elevation level of the snow covered mountain, they headed back down the mountain to search for the victims of the avalanche.

"This high-altitude snowy alpine environment is very similar to the mountains of Afghanistan where a pilot or ground troop could need the skills of a pararescueman," Sergeant Giacchino said. "So the training we are doing here today is applicable training both to prepare us for a real world rescue on

Mount Hood or in the mountains of a contingency theater."

Pararescuers from the 304th RQS are used to being called on for assistance.

"We train so that others may live," Captain Bernard said. "We are paramedics with unique technical search and rescue skills. We bring enough first aid and equipment to care for our victims and transport them out of danger.

"Training with local civilian rescue organizations enhances our skills and makes us familiar with the people we will be working with in a real SAR mission," he said. (AFRC News Service)

# Man on a mission



U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Jack Braden

Senior Master Sgt. Rene Rubiella, who lost his daughter, Allie, in an automobile accident in 2005, talks to high school seniors attending Operation NOW events on Tuesday, April 11, 2006, at Patrick Air Force Base, Fla. Sergeant Rubiella talked about the loss of his daughter and emphasized safe driving.

**By 1st Lt. Cathleen Snow**  
**920th Rescue Wing Public**  
**Affairs**

A 17-foot shelved wall, every inch filled with trophies, stands larger than life in the home of Senior Master Sgt. Rene Rubiella, 920th Operations Group Superintendent.

The trophies were awarded to his daughter Alexandra, known as Allie, for her excellence in mastering martial arts.

In 2003, Allie took the martial arts world title in her class, for the second time. Two years later, weeks before her high school graduation, the teen died in an automobile accident in Brevard County, Fla.

“Your life is that little dash between eight numbers. The year you were born and the year you died. It’s up to you to make that dash longer. Not on our Watch!” said Sergeant Rubiella at a recent 920th Rescue Wing teen driver safety program event, dubbed Operation Not on Our Watch, which he coordinated from beginning to end.

Operation NOW was created by the 920th Rescue Wing to better prepare the young drivers of Brevard County. In addition to Allie, there were 7 teens who lost their lives in automobile accidents last year in the county.

For Sergeant Rubiella, losing his daughter was devastating,

“but it’s not the end, it’s the beginning,” he said.

The event took on a life of its own. With Sergeant Rubiella at the helm, many community organizations came on board to work toward his vision.

After 10 months of planning, the event lasted three hours each of three days.

Approximately 3,000 Brevard County high school seniors viewed the program, which was divided into three venues.

One was a multimedia presentation of car accident victims; another consisted of hands-on demonstrations; and the third was an area where wrecked cars were parked. The grand finale of

the event was a reenacted 911 call at the scene of a simulated accident.

All of the students came together on the flightline to view this part of the event.

Two previously wrecked cars were arranged as if they had just crashed. The passengers were made up to look like they were seriously injured.

The scene unfolded as the students watched: Katie Smith was out celebrating when she smashed her car into another.

There were lights flashing as ambulances and fire trucks raced to the scene. It was chaos.

A police officer began assessing the scene over a loudspeaker. As Melbourne Fire and Rescue went to work extracting Katie's passenger who was trapped, glass crunched like the sound of fresh snow amplified in surround sound. Students' eyes were glued to the horrific events.

The Health First Flight helicopter hovered over the scene.

Firemen used deafening motorized tools to cut the roof off the car to free the victim.

The medical examiner confirms two dead.

Katie wailed in terror and is forced to complete a sobriety test which she fails. She is then charged with DUI manslaughter and taken away in a police car.

Three speakers complete the day with their explanations of further damage caused by the accidents.

A trauma surgeon from Health First said that the number of hospital personnel who are waiting for you when you are involved in a car accident is unbelievable. To tell your family you'll never walk again is the hardest part. He said he doesn't consider them car accidents because they're preventable, "it's a crash," he said.

The District Attorney said you will serve up to 30 years in prison for two felony counts and you will pay thousands of dollars in fines.

Then it was Sergeant Rubiella's turn. "You have no idea how much you are loved. This community loves you! Do you think we do this for fun? We don't. We do this to wake you up!" said Sergeant Rubiella to the sea of students sitting on the bleachers positioned in front of the scene.

"There is nothing more painful than realizing the car in that accident is just a little too familiar," said Sergeant Rubiella.

A little over a year ago Sergeant Rubiella described driving past the scene of his daughter's accident.

After police described the driver to him, Sergeant Rubiella didn't think it could be his daughter, but his instincts told him otherwise.

He asked to have the plate run. "When the policeman came back," he said. "That car belongs to you Mr. Rubiella."

Sergeant Rubiella, on the verge of tears said, "Not while I'm standing here in this Air Force uniform will I allow this to happen to you. Now it's up to you!" "Now it's on your watch," he said. "It's your responsibility to drive it into those who you love." "Hang up the phone; tell your baby sister, your cousins, and your parents that it's worth nothing to go too fast. It's worth nothing to speak on a cell phone, it's worth nothing to blast your eardrums, if you are dead!" he said.

"At some point, you have to say, not on my watch will anything ever happen as a result of my neglect, immaturity or inability," said Sergeant Rubiella.

"I know I'm never going to see her again, but I can do something

about it. This is more than just one parent grieving over a child. It's one parent showing what needed to be done by executing and directing," said Sergeant Rubiella.

Sergeant Rubiella said it was his daughter who helped him get through his grief. When he felt worn out or tired, he said he felt her cheering him on, saying Dad, c'mon give it a little more.

Liz Doerr, a senior at Satellite High School attended Operation NOW and said the program was really moving. "I'm 18 years old and I just got my license. The way I've been driving...I haven't really been paying attention.

I recognize now what it would put my brothers and sisters, mom and grandma through if something happened to me."

Nathan Vasquez, also a senior at Satellite High School said he was more careful on the road when Allie died last year.

"It changed the way I acted.

Everyone cared for her. It made a big impact. I was more careful, I didn't do anything stupid for a while. But it wore off."

He continued, "His [Sergeant Rubiella's] words at the end were the most moving part of the day." And he said he thinks Operation NOW will have an everlasting effect.

Shortly after Operation Not on Our Watch ended, on April 26, Norman R. Wolfinger, state attorney, 18th judicial circuit of Florida, awarded Senior Master Sgt. Rene Rubiella with the 2006 Senator Howard Futch Memorial Leadership Award in recognition of his leadership on Operation NOW.



# Two down, two to go

## *920th hits the mark in ORE Phase II*

**By 1st Lt. Cathleen Snow  
920th Rescue Wing  
Public Affairs**

**T**wo down, two to go is one way of looking at the Phase II of the Operation Readiness Exercise the 920th Rescue Wing participated in here April 3 - 7.

Phase I of the ORE was completed April 2005.

"The good news is it went better than expected. Work remains, but we are on track," said Lt. Col. Marc DiPaolo, the warlord for the exercise.

The next step is the Readiness Assistance Visit Sept. 9 - 15, followed by the Operational Readiness Inspection Oct. 30 - Nov. 5.

"We have not had an ORI since 1997 when we were a rescue group, but that does not mean we have not been busy," said Col. Joe Trippy, the 920th RQW Vice Wing Commander.

"We have performed combat operations in Iraq, Afghanistan and endured lengthy separations from our families. Compared to that stuff, this will be easy," said Colonel Trippy.

Colonel Trippy emphasized Ability to Survive and Operate training.

He said, "For many it's the first time they have donned the gear in a while, which will save their lives during a nuclear, biological or chemical attack. For others, the exercise was an opportunity to help their fellow airmen polish their skills."

"We have to be able to perform our jobs in our training gear because if we cannot launch aircraft, we cannot perform combat

search and rescue, which is what we do," said Colonel Trippy.

"We have got to always be ready at a moment's notice. We are postured to fly missions every day," said Colonel Trippy.

As the week of ORE scenarios unfolded, retrieving pilots was a fraction of the job description. Rescue teams recovered a civilian in trouble too.

In one ORE scenario, Capt. Greg Lowdermilk, ORE planning cell, developed a story line. A female news reporter who was abducted needed help. A convoy sent in to rescue her was halted because of a simulated IED.

Senior Airman Jennifer Figueroa, a 920th weapons troop, volunteered for the role as the reporter, said Captain Lowdermilk.

He said they took the scenario a step further and said the reporter was now in the city and the Iraqi police had her and she needed to be picked up. The HH-60G crew and pararescuemen landed at Avon Park, Fla., where the scenario was played out.

"When they landed, they found themselves immersed in a crowd of civilians. It was extremely challenging, but could have easily happened," said Captain Lowdermilk.

"We not only designed the scenarios to help us pass the ORE, but to spin us up for the AEF (Air Expeditionary Force) deployments," said Captain Lowdermilk.

There were a number of reservists throughout the ORE who volunteered to be survivors who were vital to the scenarios said Captain Lowdermilk.

"Being a volunteer allowed them to see what the unit does and gave them a sense of pride," he said.

### ORE Information

The scheduled dates for the 920th RQW Operational Readiness Exercise and Inspection are:  
**Second ORE:  
September 9-15**

**AFSOC/IG ORI:  
Oct. 30-November 5**

After the ORE was wrapped up, Colonel DiPaolo said, "We've covered a lot of ground, but we have to remain focused."

"The Air Force has every right to inspect us. We have to demonstrate our competency." And that competency must encompass your job skills as well as your wartime readiness skills," he said.

"Use these [ORE, RAV, ORI] as an opportunity to back away from your day-to-day routine at home station. Allow yourself to look at the deployed situation as interesting and useful. Things are changing everyday in the Air Force," said Colonel DiPaolo.

"We need leaders in the deployed environment of all ranks. People who are willing to get involved and observe the details. (For example) Hey, you've compromised sensitive information or you are not wearing your chin strap," said Colonel DiPaolo.

"Appointed leaders cannot be everywhere," he said. "That is why we need you to, 'jump in' and think of it as real."

"We have such incredible talent in this wing. We can't fail. As long as you participate, we have no alternative but to do well," he said.





U.S. Air Force photos by 1st Lt. Cathleen Snow

A marshaler safely guides an HC-130 Hercules aircraft across the flightline during the ORE in April.



Above: Senior Master Sgt. Ray Padgett awaits his next tasking during the wing exercise.



Right: Participants in the ORE were tasked with real-world medical emergency scenarios that allowed them to train like they fight.

# Around The Pattern



Col. Michael Shook (left) accepts the American flag from an honor guard member during his retirement ceremony in April. The former commander of the 943rd Rescue Group at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, N.M., retired after 31 years of service. Congratulations Colonel Shook!



Col. Steven Kirkpatrick (left), 920th Rescue Wing commander presents Col. Michael Shook (right) with a retirement citation signed by the President of the United States.

Courtesy photos

# BRIEFS

## New Bonuses Approved

HQ AFRC recently approved new bonus amounts authorized by the FY 2005 and FY 2006 National Defense Authorizations Acts.

Air Force Reserve members may now qualify for bonuses up to \$20,000 based on the type of incentive bonus and term of enlistment.

Reservists will be required to enlist for three or six years and sign a bonus program contract.

There are some basic requirements such as enlistment into a bonus duty AFSC, maximum years of service (based on paydate), and satisfactory participation in the Air Force Reserve.

Changes to the bonus program include a new payment schedule of 50 percent after completion of the first year and equal yearly installments thereafter through the end of the contract period.

There is no longer a maximum number of bonuses that a member may receive. However, bonus payments will not be paid beyond 24 years of service (based on paydate). The increased bonus amounts are retroactive to Oct. 1, 2005.

Anyone that has enlisted in a bonus duty AFSC since that time should contact Master Sgt. Clay Henry, 920th RQW Career Assistance Advisor, Bldg. 313, Room 102, or call (321) 494-9016.

## Commander's Column Cont.

*(Cont. from Page 2)* groups and squadrons, we can foster camaraderie and improve efficiency.

We need to work closer with our group, the 943rd. We will work with the Davis-Monthan and Portland folks so that we can help each other do our mission even better.

We also need to continue to work well with the 45th Space Wing and be a good tenant and force provider for their operation. I encourage all of you to actively participate in our community as well. I will work closely with local dignitaries and Congressmen to help improve our way of life.

We should also take advantage of this great location to have fun together through various wing and squadron functions.

Lastly, we must always be prepared to help shape our future. The Air Force is very dynamic and our mission is continuously evolving. We must take the lead in deciding our destiny and it will then be my job to clearly communicate that to my bosses.

Again, I look forward to meeting and working with each of you.

Thanks for your dedication and service That Others May Live .

## Hometown News Release

The 920th Rescue Wing Public Affairs Office has streamlined the process to submit news to your hometown. It only takes a few minutes to fill out an electronic Hometown News Release Form or DD form 2266. The form can be found on the 920th's internal web page. The link is on the left hand column beneath the title 'Popular Links.'

Open the electronic DD Form 2266 and fill it out on your computer screen then hit the send button to submit it electronically.

The form will automatically be submitted to the 920th public affairs office e-mail box.

Great reasons for submitting a Hometown Release Form

- \* It is virtually the only way to get recognition outside the base for an accomplishment.
- \* Most people like to see their name in print.
- \* The individual's family likes it because it's public recognition for a son, daughter, or other relative.
- \* It's a way to keep in touch with hometown friends, or even past or future employers.
- \* It gives the Air Force excellent publicity all across the United States, and also supports recruiting efforts. It is one of the Air Force's most effective Public Affairs programs.

No other positive Air Force news hits the breakfast or dinner table as often as does hometown news.

In short, it does something good for everyone. You are the key individual to get the process going by submitting a DD form 2266 available at the 920th's internal web page:

<http://coffs02/>

Submit a Hometown News Release for:

- \* Graduation from basic training (school submits).
- \* Completion and commissioning from OTS (school submits).
- \* Graduation from initial-entry, AFSC-producing schools (school submits).
- \* Promotions to all ranks (at time of pin-on).
- \* Arrival for duty for all military, except when arriving from a school, and for all DoD civilian members.
- \* Awards and decorations for individual achievement. A copy of the citation must accompany the DD Form 2266.
- \* Advanced training completion, reenlistments, individual achievements, retirements, assumption of command for commanders, and sports competitions

# That Others May Live



U.S. Air Force photo by Cathleen Snow

Emergency technicians reenact a response to a simulated car crash during Operation Not on Our Watch in April. Students from Brevard County high schools witnessed the event held at Patrick Air Force Base, Fla.



U.S. Air Force photo by Cathleen Snow

An Operation NOW car crash victim recounts her version of events to a law enforcement official. In the scenario, the driver was intoxicated and arrested for DUI manslaughter.



U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Jack Braden

Before departing Patrick AFB, students passed a coffin with a mirror placed inside to drive home the effects of irresponsible driving.